

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3451

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BG, PK

SUBJECT: BHUTTO'S VISIT

1. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ANNOUNCED JUNE 20 THAT PAKISTAN'S PRESIDENT BHUTTO WILL VISIT DACCA JUNE 27 TO 29. BRIEF PRESS STATEMENT SAID BHUTTO COMING AT INVITATION OF PRIME MINISTER MUJIB AND WOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN IMPORTANT DELEGATION OF PARLIAMENTARIANS, OFFICIALS, AND JOURNALISTS. BDGLKOREIGN MINISTER KAMAL HOSSAIN, ON HIS DEPARTURE JUNE 19 FOR ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE IN MALAYSIA, WAS RETICENT IN DISCUSSING PROPOSED VISIT, CONFIRMING ONLY THAT AN ADVANCE TEAM WOULD ARRIVE BEFORE THE VISIT AND THAT OFFICIAL LEVEL TALKS IN ADDITION TO THE SUMMIT DISCUSSIONS WERE NOT CONTEMPLATED. KAMAL RESERVED COMMENT ON THE NATURE OF BHUTTO'S ENTOURAGE AND PROGRAM. IN GENERAL KAMAL SAID APPORTIONMENT OF ASSETS AND NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WOULD BE DISCUSSED.

2. COMMENT: BDG IS CAUTIOUS IN ITS HANDLING OF THE VISIT, REFLECTIVE IN PART OF DISAGREEMENT WITHIN THE RULING PARTY OVER THE DEGREE OF RAPPROACHMENT WITH PAKISTAN AND OF CONCERN OVER BHUTTO'S RECEPTION. BDG'S ATTITUDE SEEMS PARADOXICAL. ON THE ONE HAND, ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT ANY PROTESTS WILL BE ORGANIZED, BDG IS CONCERNED ABOUT SECURITY, GIVEN THE ANIMOSITY OF MANY BENGALLEES TOWARD BHUTTO FOR HIS PERCEIVED ROLE IN THE

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EVENTS OF 1971. ON THE OTHER HAND, GIVEN THE POPULAR DISILLUSION-

MENT OVER CONDITIONS IN BANGLADESH AND ANTICIPATION THAT RENEWED
TIES WITH PAKISTAN PROMISE A BETTER LIFE, BDG MAY FEAR THAT BHUTTO
WILL RECEIVE TOO WARM A WELCOME HERE.
BOSTER

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